

American values are to treat people fairly and with respect. Increase the minimum wage, and we will have taken a very important step down that road.

Mr. President, I understand my time has expired.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I would quote the Senator from Massachusetts again who said: Minimum wage jobs don't get you out of poverty, they keep you in poverty. Until we get a Workforce Investment Act passed around here that increases job training for 900,000 people a year so they can get higher-skilled jobs so they can get the jobs of the future, not the jobs of the past, we are going to have problems with the minimum wage and poverty.

We need to be able to give people more choices, not less choices. There is a definite difference in philosophy. We think that free enterprise can work and that it is working and that it does work, and also that States rights work. States are changing the minimum wage to match the economy of their State. Although, if they have really good jobs, they will attract people, I hope. We are having a little problem attracting people to Wyoming, and those are not for the minimum wage jobs, those are for outstanding jobs.

So people need to think a little bit about more training or moving a little bit to get better jobs and get out of the minimum wage rut that will cause a spiral. As we increase the minimum wage, we also cause an upward spiral that eliminates the value of that minimum wage.

I ask you to vote against the Kennedy amendment and to vote for my amendment.

Something that has been overlooked is my amendment includes a \$1.10 increase in the minimum wage over 18 months.

Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD a letter dated June 13, 2006, to Senator KENNEDY.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES COMMONWEALTH OF
THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS,
OFFICE OF THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED STATES,

Washington, DC, June 13, 2006.

Hon. EDWARD M. KENNEDY,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR KENNEDY: I understand that you have offered an amendment to the Department of Defense bill that would raise the minimum wage in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). While I am a proponent for an increase in our minimum wage as a step in creating opportunities for our young indigenous people to find jobs in the CNMI, I want this done in a rational and democratic manner. I object to the manner in which your amendment was offered, and find it rather arbitrary and capricious.

The Northern Marianas joined this great country because of the principles of democ-

racy that are at the heart of almost everything that is done. I will assume that your effort was prompted out of the same frustration that has fueled your colleague Congressman George Miller's desire for a quick fix to a complex problem. I had hoped those days were behind us. It is my desire that we enter into a new era of CNMI/Federal relations, an era which includes open discussion, dialogue, and a shared commitment to reform and to promote sustainable development in the CNMI.

You may not be aware that the CNMI's economy is on the verge of collapse. Unemployment is at 14%, the economy is down 23%, and this downward trend is showing no sign of reversing in the near future. An increase in our minimum wage implemented without economic considerations will surely destroy what is left of our fragile economy. I strongly believe that an appropriate increase must be a component in our economic recovery, but done in isolation will insure that recovery is impossible. Please don't take out your frustration with former CNMI and Congressional leaders on the CNMI as a whole. Your amendment may help a few, but will surely further increase unemployment and the number of business failures. Where is the American commitment to compassion and fairness?

I invite you to come to the CNMI and hold discussions with employers, employees, and the CNMI Enterprise Group, an NGO formed to promote sane and sustainable economic relief. I ask that you support my request for a sound and responsible study of the CNMI economy, and help us, not punish us.

The CNMI is without a Delegate in the House of Representatives. This fact alone prevents us from experiencing the democracy that our people have chosen. The rights of the people of the CNMI are unrepresented in the halls of Congress, and we must rely on members like yourself to see that they are treated with the same respect and integrity that the citizens of your state enjoy. I hope that we have the opportunity to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

PEDRO A. TENORIO,
Resident Representative.

Mr. ENZI. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the Kennedy amendment.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays have been requested.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 179 Leg.]

YEAS—52

Akaka	Bingaman	Carper
Baucus	Boxer	Chafee
Bayh	Byrd	Clinton
Biden	Cantwell	Coleman

Collins	Kerry
Conrad	Kohl
Dayton	Landrieu
DeWine	Lautenberg
Dodd	Leahy
Dorgan	Levin
Durbin	Lieberman
Feingold	Lincoln
Feinstein	Lugar
Harkin	Menendez
Inouye	Mikulski
Jeffords	Murray
Johnson	Nelson (FL)
Kennedy	Nelson (NE)

NAYS—46

Alexander	Dole	McCain
Allard	Domenici	McConnell
Allen	Ensign	Murkowski
Bennett	Enzi	Roberts
Bond	Frist	Santorum
Brownback	Graham	Sessions
Bunning	Grassley	Smith
Burns	Gregg	Stevens
Burr	Hagel	Sununu
Chambliss	Hatch	Talent
Coburn	Hutchison	Thomas
Cochran	Inhofe	Thune
Cornyn	Isakson	Vitter
Craig	Kyl	Voinovich
Crapo	Lott	
DeMint	Martinez	

NOT VOTING—2

Rockefeller	Shelby
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the amendment is automatically withdrawn.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. DODD. I move to lay the motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4376

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is now on the Enzi amendment.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 180 Leg.]

YEAS—45

Alexander	Ensign	McConnell
Allen	Enzi	Murkowski
Bennett	Frist	Roberts
Brownback	Graham	Santorum
Bunning	Grassley	Sessions
Burns	Gregg	Smith
Coburn	Hagel	Snowe
Cochran	Hatch	Specter
Coleman	Hutchison	Stevens
Collins	Isakson	Sununu
Craig	Kyl	Talent
Crapo	Lott	Thomas
DeWine	Lugar	Thune
Dole	Martinez	Voinovich
Domenici	McCain	Warner